

INTEGRATION OF CONTEMPORARY FASHION TRENDS INTO WOMEN'S APPAREL DESIGN IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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Abstract: Contemporary fashion is influenced by global trends, social change, and individual expression. Women's apparel evolves to reflect identity, confidence, and lifestyle. This paper explores the design of contemporary women's wear, conceptually developed to oppose fast fashion through artisanal craftsmanship. Original designs are created through trend research, conceptual sketching, and handcrafted techniques, resulting in unique garments that prioritize quality, longevity, and timeless aesthetics. The outcome is a small capsule collection of three models combining modern aesthetics, functionality, comfort, and refined artisanal details within a thoughtful textile design framework.

Key words: design, handwork, embroidery, style, fashion.

INTEGRACIJA SAVREMENIH MODNIH TRENDOVA U DIZAJN ŽENSKE ODEĆE U TEKSTILNOJ INDUSTRIJI

Apstrakt: Savremena moda je pod uticajem globalnih trendova, društvenih promena i individualnog izražavanja. Ženska odeća se razvija kako bi odražavala identitet, samopouzdanje i stil života. Ovaj rad istražuje dizajn savremene ženske odeće, konceptualno osmišljen da se suprotstavi brzom modi kroz zanatsku izradu. Originalni dizajni su kreirani kroz istraživanje trendova, konceptualno skiciranje i tehnike ručne izrade, što rezultira unikatnim komadima koji naglašavaju kvalitet, dugovečnost i bezvremensku estetiku. Rezultat je mala kapsul kolekcija od tri modela koja kombinuje savremenu estetiku, funkcionalnost, udobnost i prefinjene zanatske detalje unutar promišljenog okvira dizajna tekstila.

Ključne reči: dizajn, ručni rad, vez, stil, moda.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fashion can briefly be defined as a change in styles and appearance of clothing adopted by certain groups of people, and from a sociological perspective it represents a system of signs, a social model of values, and a way of constructing collective and individual identity.

Fashion is an integral part of culture and is expressed through clothing, jewelry, artistic objects,

and similar forms. It does not represent only a person's external appearance, but also manifests as a specific form of behavior. In other words, fashion is a way of dressing that characterizes a particular group of people within a specific period of time and is not universally accepted by all members of society. It is well known that throughout different historical periods, various body ideals have changed, and the fashion of each era attempted to follow, emphasize, or "correct" those ideals.

In the past, fashion and dress codes were much stricter regarding deviations from established norms, whereas contemporary fashion is far more liberal and diverse, with the development of numerous styles and subcultures that allow individuals to choose according to their preferences. This evolution has provided people with significantly greater freedom in how they wish to present their bodies [2,3].

Today, in all societies the body is „clothed“ and everywhere clothing and adornments have symbolic, communicative, and aesthetic significance. From this, it becomes clear that fashion establishes a new order of values in contemporary society [4].

Fashion is a significant social and economic phenomenon of a given time, but also one of the most sensitive indicators of a certain “taste of the era,” which forms the basis for any aesthetic and critical evaluation of a particular period [5]. Fashion serves as a means of identification and socialization for individuals, a form of nonverbal communication, an attempt at prestige, and an object of pleasure.

Fashion is applied art. The concept of fashion, of course, does not refer only to clothing and adornment, since today fashion is equally present in all other segments of human life (cars, production, science, etc.). Due to the frequent identification of concepts, it is necessary to emphasize the distinction between “fashion” and “style.” Although they share some related elements, each new style usually “becomes fashionable,” and when it is “out of fashion” (in that style), it is generally subject to decline. Authentic style demonstrates characteristics in structure, taste, texture and functions as an inseparable whole. Fashion often moves in step with styles. Very often, fashion is repetitive, and an “outdated” style can return to fashion [6].

Today, fashion represents a significant phenomenon of the modern world. It is considered that fashion has a strong influence on the process of self-realization and the creation of an individual’s identity. The characteristics of materials and forms are highly important within the complex fashion system. Fashion appears cyclically, disappears, and returns in a similar or modified form. It should be emphasized that fashion is “consumed” only by certain groups, while the whole is on its way toward them. Initial fashion impulses cease to be fashionable the moment they are widely accepted [7].

2. Historical context of fashion trends

Fashion trends have always been closely intertwined with social transformations, historical events,

and technological advancements, serving as a barometer of changes in culture, politics, science and the economy. Throughout history, major events such as revolutions, wars, scientific discoveries, and technological innovations have shaped the ways people express their identity, political views, social status, and their responses to the world around them.

The Roaring Twenties marked a period of rapid economic growth and widespread social and cultural change, fueled by a sense of optimism following the devastating legacy of the First World War. During this time, women’s fashion broke away from the restrictive and cumbersome styles of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Women enjoyed greater freedom in their personal lives and expanded roles in society. This optimism, was short-lived, as the post-Second World War period saw a return to more cautious and functional fashion reflecting the economic, political and social realities of postwar reconstruction efforts [8, 9].

2.1. The age of cultural experimentation

The age of cultural experimentation (late 19th century and intensified following World War I) refers to a period when fashion underwent significant transformation, moving away from traditional norms. Clothing became a medium for personal and social expression, with designers exploring bold colors, innovative fabrics, and unconventional silhouettes. This era reflects broader societal shifts, including a focus on individuality, social change and cultural creativity. Fashion during this time was no longer solely about practicality or status it became a tool for rebellion, self-expression, and engagement with evolving cultural and social dynamics.

A notable departure from postwar restraint was Christian Dior’s 1947 collection, called the “Corolle,” better known as the New Look. Characterized by extravagant fabrics, feminine silhouettes, tightly corseted waists, and full skirts, it deliberately broke away from the somber wartime styles. While it sparked controversy at the time, it also reflected broader societal desires for stability, luxury, and a return to traditional gender roles after the disruption of the war years [10].

Another major shift came with the economic growth of the 1960s, which fostered a new influential cultural movement. Fashion became a tool for rebellion, self-expression and civil rights movements, characterized by flowing fabrics, bright colors and extravagant costume choices, mirroring the social revolutions taking place worldwide, from antiwar movements to the second wave of feminism.

Technological advancements in production, the rise of digital media, and globalization at the end of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries transformed the way trends reached audiences and the speed at which they spread. Whereas trends once took years to cross borders and develop in other parts of the world, the accessibility and use of the internet now allow new trends from one side of the globe to influence street style on the other. Fashion has thus become a symbol of a connected global society [11].

2.2. Social Status and Self-Expression

Clothing serves as a powerful tool of identification, defining symbolic boundaries between individuals. Fashion and clothing function as means of constructing and expressing cultural and social identity. Through clothing choices, individuals embody and communicate aspects of their identity, a practice that has existed since ancient times and continues into the present day [12].

Beyond the individual level, fashion operates as a collective social mechanism. A fashion trend is considered appropriate only within a specific temporal and social context. What is defined as fashionable is often determined by a relatively small group of fashion leaders whose social status enables them to influence others. While fashion depends on followers for its diffusion, it simultaneously requires exclusion as not all styles or individuals can remain fashionable at the same time. Once a particular style becomes overly widespread, it loses its distinguishing function and is gradually replaced by a new one.

This cyclical process gives fashion its dynamic and historical character. Fashion continually generates and regenerates ideas that can be reused, adapted, and reinterpreted across different periods. Historically, fashion was accessible only to a limited segment of society. In contemporary societies, increased economic prosperity has enabled a significantly larger portion of the global population to participate in the "fashion race." Nevertheless, economic factors alone do not explain this expansion. Greater psychological mobility, together with the development of modern communication channels has intensified the presence and influence of fashion in everyday life [13].

As fashion becomes more widespread, it also acquires institutional characteristics. It exists throughout society, particularly where social groups have the opportunity to imitate one another by adopting distinct cultural patterns. In the twenty-first century, fashion shows tendencies toward gradual institutionalization, increasingly intersecting with sociology on

one hand and the sphere of artistic production on the other.

Ultimately, fashion functions as a social regulator. It simultaneously reveals social inequalities and mitigates visible differences between groups. Fashion is not only a means of demonstrating social status, but also a powerful instrument of influence. Through socio-psychological mechanisms, it creates images and social situations that shape perceptions, attitudes, and values. These ideas circulate within the fashion system itself, forming a self-sustaining cycle that reflects and reinforces the structure of the society it serves [14].

2.3. Contemporary Fashion as a Reflection of Modern Society

Fashion acts as a reflection of society, capturing the cultural and social transformations of the modern world. The industry is in a constant state of change shaped by technological advancements, shifts in consumer behavior and political and social movements. Through fashion, individuals express their identity and distinguish themselves from others, while it also serves as a powerful medium for communicating political and social messages. As the world continues to evolve, fashion adapts alongside it, mirroring the values and concerns of contemporary society. The following examples demonstrate how fashion responds to cultural and social changes and provide concrete illustrations of the industry's adaptation to these developments. Contemporary society is deeply preoccupied with consumption, and fashion reflects this fundamental human activity. Consumption manifests not only through the individual purchase of clothing and accessories but also through identification with the styles of others as celebrities, social groups or cultural identities. In Western societies fashion and consumption are often intertwined, forming "consumer cultures" where material wealth, personal appearance, and style are highly valued. In a globalized world individuality is increasingly emphasized, often surpassing the expression of collective group identity.

In recent years, studies of fashion and retailing have highlighted the growing dominance of mass and fast fashion. Today, it is possible for clothing designed in one country to be manufactured in another and sold in a third, almost anywhere in the world, often at low cost. Some items may wear out or be discarded after only a few uses. Research indicates that the fashion cycle is accelerating in the early twenty-first century, new collections had to be available immediately, with complete stock turnover occurring within

a maximum of six weeks. This raises questions about the future impact on natural resources and sustainable practices, as well as who truly benefits from this phenomenon.

The fast fashion phenomenon can also be seen as indicative of how postmodern consumers live today, they constantly adapt their behavior, lifestyle, and wardrobe to follow the latest trends. Consumption becomes a method of self-fashioning, whereby individuals produce a unique identity through the fashion and styles they adopt within the continuous flow of a Western-influenced global culture. Subcultures, in this context may transform into "style tribes" that experience no fragmentation, consuming fashion as an ongoing process of identity performance. Ultimately, fashion not only mirrors society but also shapes individual and collective identities making it a dynamic lens through which the transformations of the modern world can be observed [15,16].

2.3.1 Role of fashion trends in the design process

Fashion is constantly evolving, and with it the tastes and needs of people also change. Fashion trends play a crucial role in the design process serving as a guide, source of inspiration and reflection of the era in which the clothing is created. Trends indicate what is popular at a given time in terms of colors, shapes, materials, silhouettes and styles. They emerge under the influence of culture, music, art and technology.

In fashion design, the creative process begins with a spark of inspiration which can come from virtually anywhere. Designers observe current trends and use them as a foundation to shape their own unique ideas. They begin sketching and manipulating fabrics-transforming abstract concepts into distinctive designs. Designers often follow trends to create collections that resonate with the contemporary moment. By drawing on these trends they can develop ideas that are likely to be accepted by the audience. Trends also help designers anticipate the needs and desires of their clients guiding the creation of clothing that is both innovative and relevant [17].

2.3.1.1 Fashion Trend Forecasting

Forecasting allows industry leaders to expand their thinking about changes, anticipate future developments and project likely outcomes. Marketing managers position products in the market by employing both short-term and long-term forecasts. Product developers, designers and production managers use short-term trend forecasts covering colors,

textiles and style directions to shape upcoming collections. Essentially forecasting attempts to project past trends into the future recognizing that trends are characterized by temporary increases or decreases in popularity.

Trend forecasting is more than simply attending fashion shows and selecting potential trends. It is a comprehensive process that encompasses changes in color palettes, style directions, lifestyle shifts and consumer purchasing patterns.

Fashion professionals closely monitor the latest fashion news to identify emerging trends and shifts in lifestyle.

Through systematic forecasting and observation fashion professionals can anticipate market demands, guide creative decisions and align collections with both current and emerging consumer preferences. This structured approach ensures that designers and brands remain relevant within the rapidly changing landscape of contemporary fashion [18].

2.4. Research on current fashion Trends

Research on current fashion trends indicates that the industry is increasingly shaped by cultural, social and technological shifts, as well as by the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. One prominent trend is the emphasis on comfort, versatility, and unconventional combinations of clothing, reflecting the changes in lifestyle brought about by remote work and extended periods spent at home. Silhouettes are becoming looser and more fluid, fabrics are chosen for ease of movement and designers are blending casual and formal elements to accommodate both professional and personal needs. This evolution demonstrates how fashion responds to practical realities while maintaining aesthetic appeal.

Today, minimalism continues to influence fashion, but it has evolved beyond simple pared-down basics into a more intentional and refined aesthetic. Known as quiet luxury or neo-minimalism, this trend emphasizes craftsmanship, high-quality materials, subtle tailoring and understated silhouettes that prioritize longevity over fleeting statement pieces. Unlike bold, logo-driven fashion, minimalist design today often features clean lines, neutral palettes and expert construction that communicate elegance through restraint rather than excess, aligning with consumer desires for quality, sustainability and timelessness.

This refined minimalism is reflective of broader cultural shifts in consumer behavior where individuals seek simplicity in their wardrobes as a response to

visual overload and fast fashion saturation. The focus on versatile pieces that can be mixed and matched contributes to building a adaptable wardrobe rather than constantly chasing micro-trends [19].

Moreover, contemporary fashion is not just about aesthetic simplicity but also a mindset that reflects contemporary values of sustainability and functional living. As consumers become more conscious of the environmental and social impact of clothing production, the demand for fewer, higher-quality garments that retain relevance across seasons continues to grow. By emphasizing simplicity with purpose minimalism it demonstrates a shift toward intentional consumption and personal style rooted in authenticity [20, 21].

2.5. Handcraft in Contemporary Fashion

In an age defined by speed, automation, and mass production craftsmanship is experiencing a remarkable revival. From hand-woven textiles to intricate embroidery, artisanal techniques are re-entering mainstream fashion with renewed appreciation. As consumers seek authenticity, culture and deeper meaning in what they purchase handcrafted fashion is emerging as a new form of luxury.

This revival reflects a shift in consumer values. Modern shoppers particularly younger generations, increasingly view fashion as an expression of identity. Mass-produced clothing no longer carries the emotional or cultural significance it once did. Instead, consumers prefer pieces with a story, cultural resonance and human touch. Handcrafted garments carry the imprint of the maker, with every detail demonstrating skill, and creativity. Craftsmanship also supports sustainability as handmade textiles often consume less energy and utilize natural fibers, plant-based dyes and slower production cycles, reducing environmental impact. Unlike fast fashion garments designed for short-term use, handcrafted pieces are built to last.

The resurgence of artisanal fashion also reflects a broader cultural shift toward slower and more mindful living. Growing awareness of the environmental and ethical consequences of mass production has encouraged consumers to seek alternatives rooted in artistry with respect for materials.

Ultimately, craftsmanship represents more than design - it embodies culture, identity, and innovation. As the global fashion industry evolves, the future will belong not only to technology and speed but also to the skilled hands and timeless traditions that give fashion its soul [22].

3. EXPERIMENTAL

3.1. Models inspiration

The models that are presented in this paper draw inspiration from contemporary fashion trends, combining classic elegance with modern innovation. Each piece is thoughtfully designed to incorporate handcrafted embroidery and unique details which elevate the garments beyond mere clothing to expressions of art and individuality.

The models (Fig. 1) exemplify a modern approach to fashion, where classic elements are seamlessly blended with innovative details and trends that define the current fashion landscape.

- The first model features a long, flowing soft pink skirt paired with a top adorned with voluminous sleeves and floral appliqués. The inclusion of handcrafted embroidery on the shoulder adds a unique artistic touch, reflecting the quiet luxury and slow fashion trends where meticulous detailing and artisanal craftsmanship elevate the garment's value and exclusivity. This design embodies romantic volume and femininity, resonating strongly with contemporary preferences for elegance and individuality.
- The second model presents a minimalist yet elegant grey long skirt complemented by an asymmetrical green shawl and subtle red accents. This outfit embraces the principles of neo-minimalism, combining clean lines and understated sophistication with unexpected floral details. The hand-embroidered elements incorporated into the design emphasize personalization and authenticity aligning with the growing consumer focus on sustainability. The green accessory also symbolizes ecological awareness, which are prominent themes in today's fashion trends.
- The third model has an asymmetric, sculptural silhouette in a delicate lilac tone, enriched with hand-stitched floral embroidery and intricate details. This design highlights creativity and experimental spirit within contemporary fashion, illustrating how handcrafted techniques merge artistry with practicality. The presented models reflect the current fashion philosophy that merges traditional techniques with modern trends, prioritizing quality, individuality, artistic creativity and sustainability.



Figure 1: Fashion sketches of the new female models inspired by the contemporary fashion trends

The models are inspired by contemporary fashion trends and feature the following colors: white, pink, violet, red, burgundy, green, gray, and black. This color palette combines warm and cool tones to create visual depth and aesthetic balance.

- Pink and violet introduce softness and a romantic feel, while red and burgundy add passion and energy.
- Green brings a sense of freshness and harmony.
- White and gray provide calmness.
- Black contributes elegance, drama and structure.

This combination of colors highlights the individuality of the designs and emphasizes the creative vision behind the collection.

The finished models represent the tangible outcome of the design process, bringing the creative concepts to life. Each piece integrates handcrafted embroidery and unique detailing, emphasizing individuality and artisanal quality. These models combine contemporary silhouettes, textures and color palettes to reflect the spirit of the collection while maintaining functionality and wearability. The completed garments demonstrate how modern fashion can balance trend relevance with craftsmanship, creating pieces that are both visually compelling and conceptually meaningful.



Figure 2: Color chart used for the new models



Figure 3: Appearance of the first model [23]



Figure 4: Appearance of the second model [23]



Figure 5: Appearance of the third model [23]

4. CONCLUSION

This paper demonstrates that contemporary fashion is not only a reflection of societal trends but also a platform for creativity, individuality and sustainable practices. The study culminated in the creation of three finished models of women's clothing, each inspired by modern fashion trends. These garments exemplify how design concepts can be translated into tangible pieces that balance style, artistic handwork and durability.

A defining feature of these models is the incorporation of handcrafted elements, including embroidery and intricate details, which enhance the uniqueness and artistic value of each piece. By embedding artisanal techniques the models move beyond mass-produced fashion, emphasizing slow fashion principles where quality, authenticity and personal expression are prioritized over speed and uniformity.

The models also reflect the growing emphasis on sustainability and durability in contemporary fashion. By focusing on carefully selected materials, thoughtful construction and timeless design, these models embody an approach that counters the transient nature of fast fashion. Each piece is designed not just as a trend item but as a lasting garment that holds aesthetic, cultural and traditional value for the wearer.

In essence, this research illustrates that modern fashion can successfully merge trend relevance, artisanal craftsmanship and sustainable practices. The three completed models serve as a concrete example of how designers can create meaningful, durable and visually compelling garments that honor both the consumer's desire for individuality and the broader need for environmental responsibility. Contemporary fashion, is a space where creativity, culture and conscientious design intersect, offering garments that are at once expressive, unique and ethically grounded.

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